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THE MUSICAL TIMES,

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THE NORWICH AND WORCESTER MUSICAL FESTIVALS.

BY HENRY C. LUNN.

THE Triennial Festival at Norwich has this year depended entirely on its own merits. Illuminations and the presence of royalty so thoroughly disturbed the attention of visitors on the last occasion that with many persons the music was considered as merely that portion of a grand loyal *fête* which took place under cover. On both those who came to see the sight, and those who came to hear the music, there can be little doubt that this double attraction acted detrimentally; for all who wished to look at the Prince and Princess were obstructed by those who wished to listen to the music, and all who wished to listen to the music were obstructed by those who wished to look at the Prince and Princess. Again, it may be urged by the persons who desired to see the illuminations that they were seriously incommoded by the traffic to St. Andrew's Hall; and by those who went to St. Andrew's Hall that by the time the music was over the illuminations were out. If the moral deduced from this were that royalty and coloured lamps will not successfully mix with good music, Norwich has a right to be proud of having become a martyr to the promulgation of this truth; and we may confidently rely upon it that future Festivals will not be associated with circumstances so utterly uncongenial with what should be their true intent.

As customary at Norwich, the Festival commenced on Monday evening, the tickets for this performance being sold at a rate sufficiently reduced to justify its being called a "popular" concert; although, curiously enough, the programme was the only classical one provided in the evening. After the National Anthem, Mendelssohn's "Hymn of Praise" was given, the principal parts being assigned to Madlle. Tietjens, Madame Talbot-Cherer and Mr. Cummings. The instrumental portion of this work was finely played, if we except the occasional unsteadiness caused by the resolution of some of the leading orchestral performers to maintain their own time, in opposition to that given by Mr. Benedict, a system which we consider on all occasions most reprehensible. A conductor should be as implicitly obeyed in the orchestra as a commanding officer in the field; for in both cases they alone are responsible for results. To persist in hurrying or holding back a movement, in direct violation of the expressed will of a conductor, until he is compelled to alter his beat, is a triumph scarcely to be proud of, inasmuch as this musical contest can never be fought out on even grounds before a public audience. It is needless to say how magnificently Madlle. Tietjens declaimed the solo, "Praise thou the Lord," and indeed with what energy and expression she rendered the whole of the truly religious music throughout this work; nor is it necessary to dwell upon the earnest singing of Mr. Cummings, (especially in the well-known recitative, "Watchman, will the night soon pass?") because he has already proved his power of grappling with this music before a London audience. But

Madame Talbot-Cherer comes to us without a "name;" and the question is, (even supposing that she were twice as talented as she is), whether the orchestra at the Norwich Festival is the legitimate place in which to endeavour to make one. In the "Hymn of Praise" she was fairly successful—in many parts, even, evincing much good feeling and truth of expression; but in the following work, *Acis and Galatea*, in which she was cast for the trying part of Galatea, the manner in which she was over-weighted by the music became too obvious to be doubted—even, we should hope, by her ill-judged friends. Painful as it must always be to write truths, when such truths affect individuals, it must be remembered that those who recklessly challenge criticism have only themselves to blame for the result: art is far above artists; and it need scarcely be feared, therefore, that the pen of the conscientious critic will ever attack persons save in the defence of principles. Madame Talbot-Cherer has a tolerably well-trained voice, of limited power, and as a second rate useful singer may hold a fair position; but in the attempt to divide the honours with an artist like Madlle. Tietjens at an important Festival, she will have to pay the usual penalties enforced upon all those ambitious persons who begin their career by showing the public what they *cannot* do. Mr. Vernon Rigby sang the whole of the music of *Acis* with excellent taste, and created a genuine effect in "Love in her eyes" and "Love sounds the alarm;" Mr. Cummings, in the small part of Damon, was painstaking, as he always is; his song, "Would you gain the tender creature," receiving every justice at his hands; and Mr. Santley, as Polyphemus, gave the well-known song, "O ruddier than the cherry," with his usual effect, marring it, however, to our mind—and we believe to the mind of all Handel lovers—by the high G at the conclusion. Whether Mr. Santley would venture on such a reading as this in one of the composer's sacred songs we know not; but we should have thought that all Handel's works had by this time become sufficiently "sacred" to rest on their own merits in performance. The choruses, both in the "Hymn of Praise" and *Acis*, were on the whole extremely satisfactory, the soprano voices especially being exceedingly fresh and well in tune. Of course the want of more rehearsals was felt; but, as a rule, the most difficult choruses went the best, "Wretched lovers" (one or two unimportant slips excepted) being given with wonderful precision and effect.

Reserving for the present any notice of the miscellaneous evening concerts, we pass to the first morning performance on Wednesday, the programme of which consisted of selections from Mr. H. Hugo Pierson's Oratorio called *Hezekiah*, and the whole of Spohr's *Fall of Babylon*. We have heard a great deal lately about the unfair treatment which Mr. Pierson's compositions have received in England, by which we are induced to believe that this neglected composer has many enemies. Whether this be true or not, we can positively affirm that his reputation has suffered much more from the warmth of his friends than from the coldness of his foes. Since the production of his Oratorio, *Jerusalem*, at the Norwich Festival of 1852, Mr. Pierson has been comparatively forgotten; and if his admirers had been wise enough to hold their peace until the extracts from his new work had enabled him to speak once more, as a composer should speak, through his music, he

would have had a better chance of meeting with that reward due to an earnest and cultivated musician; but, suffering from an ill-advised attempt to exalt him to the level of Mendelssohn, he must not be surprised if the tendency should be to place him a little below his real worth. The selections performed (which we have a right to conclude represent the average merit of the work) consisted of an Overture, ten vocal pieces, and an instrumental "Introduction, representing the approach of Sennacherib's army." Placing aside all Mr. Pierson's antecedents, and judging him only by the music we heard, we must confidently say that however the audience may complain of "unfair treatment," the composer himself has no right to murmur; for had it not been for a large amount of that pressure from without, by which unmusical committees are too often moved, his compositions could never have occupied that place at a great Festival which by right belongs to the hallowed works of genius, or to the writings of those who have already gradually won their way to public confidence and esteem. We do not say that Mr. Pierson writes badly either for voices or instruments—on the contrary, there is much fairly manufactured choral music, cut to the sacred pattern, throughout his work, and a number of conventional vocal phrases fitted effectively to the words in the solo parts—but either he is utterly deficient in the power of developing a single subject when he invents one, or he studiously avoids doing so on principle; for, with the exception of a very elegant solo and chorus, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (exquisitely given by Madlle. Tietjens, and deservedly encored), the whole of the music seemed so utterly destitute of purpose as to leave but a vague impression upon the hearer that he had been compelled, like the wedding guest, in the *Ancient Mariner*, to listen to a dreary tale from which he would fain have escaped. The best part of Mr. Pierson's composition is undoubtedly the overture; for although there is little interest in the themes, some clever instrumentation deserves to be mentioned with commendation; and there is moreover much skill in the treatment of the two subjects which progress simultaneously. The chorus, "Who shall ascend," may also be cited as the best in the work. It is written only for male voices, and contains several fragmentary points of interest. In conclusion, as we have already said, we regret that Mr. Pierson's new Oratorio has been heralded by praise of his old one; for if *Hezekiah* cannot live on its own merits, it will not live at all. Time, which but ripens works of genius, effectually destroys all others, and no amount of galvanism can restore them. If, therefore, Norwich believes in Mr. Pierson, and Mr. Pierson believes in himself, let him stand or fall by his latest work, for his leaning towards the school of modern Germany sufficiently proves that if he cannot go forward, he will never go back. We have nothing but unqualified praise to bestow upon the execution of the work: Madlle. Tietjens, Mr. W. H. Cummings and Mr. Santley exerted themselves to the utmost; and if the solo music allotted to the gentlemen fell flatly upon the audience, we can only say that it was no fault of the singers. Mr. Pierson was applauded loudly at the conclusion of the performance of his music, and bowed his acknowledgments from his place at the organ.

The *Fall of Babylon*, following immediately upon *Hezekiah*, gained new beauty by contrast. That the

love of music is to a great extent a fashion cannot be more strikingly exemplified than in the comparative neglect of the compositions of Spohr. All that in times gone by was said of Beethoven, and would be now said by many, if they dared, of Handel, still passes as an opinion upon Spohr, because his greatest works are too rarely heard to allow the composer to speak for himself. If it were necessary to point out instances where the desire to educate the public taste, rather than to pander to its ignorance, has been in the end even financially successful, we might mention Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, and the same composer's *Jephtha*, both of which had been branded as "heavy," and committed for this crime to a lingering captivity, from which they were only released by the strenuous exertions of those who believed that before they were condemned, they should be allowed the privilege of a fair trial. Surely even those who think with ourselves, that Spohr scarcely realises the sublimity of the subjects he has chosen for his Oratorios, cannot but acknowledge that the abstract beauty of his music must ever render it more acceptable to an audience than the ambitious compositions of those aspirants to fame who hide their weakness by merely re-producing the forms into which the great writers have thrown their imperishable thoughts. The general execution of the Oratorio was good; but some of the earlier choruses were given with that unsteadiness which must always characterise performances of difficult music so hurriedly got up. Perhaps the choral effects most thoroughly satisfactory were in portions of the chorus of Jews, "The lion roused" (the fine contrasts in which were admirably sustained), the two choruses, "Come down and in the dust be humbled," (especially the concluding fugue, "He shall reign for ever,") and the final chorus "Give thanks unto God." Madlle. Tietjens was in admirable voice, and gave the two exquisite solos, "Dear child of bondage," and "No longer shall Judea's children wander," with the utmost pathos and truth of expression. Madame Talbot-Cherer, by her very careful delivery of the music which fell to her share, partially compensated for her boldness in attempting the part of *Galatea* on the Monday evening; Madame Trebelli-Bettini lent powerful aid in the well-known trio, "Loud proclaim the great Salvation;" and Madame Patey in all she had to do fully proved herself a true and conscientious artist. Mr. W. H. Cummings and Mr. Santley were also most efficient in the solo music entrusted to them—the latter gentleman producing a marked effect in the expressive air, "O what is man"—and the declamation of Signor Foli in the highly dramatic recitatives of Belshazzar, was especially deserving of commendation. Mr. A. Byron also created a favourable impression by his intelligent singing in the duet, with Madlle. Tietjens, "Judah still the chosen nation," one of the best specimens of Spohr's elegantly finished vocal pieces.

Thursday morning's performance commenced with a new sacred Cantata, called "A Song of Praise," by Mr. Horace Hill, Mus. Bac. Cantab. This composer, thank goodness, comes to us unheralded by any flourish of trumpets; but his music, we regret to say, consists merely of a number of broken fragments, the property of his glorious predecessors, which he has cemented together, with sufficient skill to deceive many persons—and amongst the rest, we fear, himself. We have little however to say in absolute dispraise of Mr. Hill's composition: he has

accomplished more than Mr. Pierson, simply because he has attempted less; and although he has betrayed no novelty of idea throughout his work, there is in reality nothing to offend. His introduction is smoothly written, and the fugue, which follows, although by no means based on a happy subject, at all events, *is* a fugue. A quintett and chorus, "Gracious is the Lord," has some effective points; and the same may be said of two quartetts (the second with chorus) all of which were, however, so exquisitely sung as to ensure a favourable reception, even with those who could not but feel the utter want of any originality of thought in the composition. A baritone solo, "While I live," (evidently founded upon Handel) and a duet, for soprano and tenor, "Cause me to hear," were amongst the most effective pieces in the Cantata. The choral recitative—always a difficult matter to handle—shows that the composer is a keen observer of the manner in which voices and orchestra should be treated, a fact also amply proved in the final chorus, "So will I always sing praise," which is put together with the workmanship of a skilled musician. The principal vocal parts were admirably sustained by Madlle. Tietjens, Madame Patey, Mr. W. H. Cummings and Mr. Santley, Madame Talbot-Cherer being only employed in the quintett. Mr. Hill, who conducted his composition, was vigorously applauded at the end; a demonstration which we sincerely trust he may estimate at its real value. The Cantata was followed by Rossini's *Messe Solennelle*, the principal parts in which were allotted to Madlle. Tietjens, Madame Trebelli-Bettini, Signor Bettini and Mr. Santley. The pieces which evidently produced the greatest effect were the same as those received with such hearty favour in the metropolis. The "Crucifixus," sung exquisitely by Madlle. Tietjens, was repeated by desire of the Mayor (who seems to exercise mildly an authority which we conceive no person in a public concert-room has any right to enjoy); the "O Salutaris" (also encored), and the "Agnus Dei" were both given with much intensity of feeling by Madame Trebelli-Bettini; and the "Domine Deus" (sung by Signor Bettini in the style of a love-song in an Italian opera), and the "Quoniam" (given by Mr. Santley in his best style) were received with that evident satisfaction by the audience, which is perhaps, after all, the most genuine applause. No elaborate criticism upon the Mass is now called for from us; but we may say that successive hearings of it only confirm our opinion as to the certainty of its effect upon a mixed audience in a concert-room, and the equal certainty of its failing to establish for itself an enduring place amongst the standard works in sacred music. Handel's *Dettingen Te Deum* concluded this long morning's performance; and on the whole we may say that it was exceedingly well given. Madame Talbot-Cherer, Madame Patey, Mr. W. H. Cummings and Signor Foli sustained the principal vocal parts, and the choral music was sung with magnificent effect throughout. The trumpet *obbligato* of Mr. T. Harper, in the solo, "Thou art the King of Glory," (finely sung by Signor Foli) was, as may be imagined, a real feature in the performance.

As usual, the "*Messiah*" attracted an enormous audience on Friday morning. The excellent singing of Madlle. Tietjens and Mr. Santley in this Oratorio is too well known to need comment, but Madame Trebelli-Bettini deserves especial commendation for the intelligent manner in which she delivered the solos which fell to her share; and Madame Patey

should also be warmly praised for her truly pathetic rendering of the air "He was despised." A good word should also be said for Madame Talbot-Cherer, who, if she did not create much effect, was at least earnest and careful. Signor Foli gave a good reading of "The people that walked in darkness;" and a real sensation was created by Mr. Vernon Rigby, who sang the whole of the tenor music with a pathos and power of declamation for which we had not before given him credit. His delivery of "Thy rebuke," and the impassioned air "Thou shalt break them," proved him at once capable of sustaining the most important parts in the great sacred works.

It would be impossible to give any detailed criticism upon the heterogeneous mass of materials heaped up, without any attempt at arrangement, in the programmes of the miscellaneous evening concerts. At the first concert, on Tuesday, the principal orchestral piece was Mendelssohn's *Reformation Symphony*, which played the people comfortably into their seats, and enabled them to recognise and chat with their friends before the real business of the evening commenced. A graceful little piece, for four violoncellos and contrabasso, called "Souvenir de Curis," by M. Paque (played by the composer, Messrs. Chipp. Guest, Pettit and Howell) also deserves mention amongst the instrumental compositions performed. The principal attraction however to the Norwich audience was, of course, the vocal music; and considering that all the principal singers engaged at the Festival appeared, this is perhaps scarcely to be wondered at. A novelty in the programme was a *Scena* (originally, we believe, composed for Madame Rudersdorff, and sung at the Gewandhaus Concerts at Leipsic), called "Medea," the composition of Signor Randegger. We regret that space will not permit of our doing that justice to this fine composition which its merits entitle it to. Enough for the present to say that it is rich in dramatic contrast, that it is scored with a masterly hand, and that in the general treatment of the subject, it displays so much real power as to lead us to hope that its composer may shortly be heard in a work of higher pretension. The *Scena* was given by Madlle. Tietjens with a thorough appreciation of its meaning in every phrase, and was conducted by Signor Randegger. The great effects in the vocal selection during the evening, besides the one already named, were made by Madlle. Ilma di Murska in the "Shadow Song" from *Dinorah*, and the brilliant "Qui la voce," Madame Trebelli Bettini in her favourite "Non più mesta," Madame Patey in Handel's "Lascia ch'io pianga," Signor Foli, in Benedict's "Rage thou angry storm," Mr. Vernon Rigby in "Salve dimora" (from *Faust*), and Wallace's impassioned song, "Yes let me like a soldier fall" (from *Maritana*)—the latter so splendidly declaimed as to receive an encore—and Signor Bettini, in Donizetti's Romance, from *Don Sebastien*, "Deserto in Terra." Madame Talbot-Cherer pleased a portion of the audience in the childish song "Water parted from the sea;" but proved her incapacity to essay the higher class of music by her share in the canon from *Fidelio*, "Il cor e la mia fe." A very excellent chorus, "Ye mariners of England," by Mr. H. Hugo Pierson, showed how vigorously and well he can write when he has the good sense to keep within his powers. This chorus is full of legitimate effect for the voices, and is admirably instrumented. It was excellently sung, and gained an enthusiastic encore.

The programme on the following evening contained an interesting selection from the works of Mozart, the principal instrumental attraction in which was a Serenade for two violins, viola and contrabasso, accompanied by violins, violas, violoncellos and drums. The autograph manuscript of this work was lent by Signor Randegger, but we hope not, as was announced, "for this occasion only." For Mozart, it is of course a mere trifle, but a trifle of such excessive beauty as to make us long for a second hearing. It is in three movements; a March, a Minuet and a Rondo. The last two movements are perhaps the most attractive, the Rondo, especially, being fanciful in the extreme. The solo parts were played to perfection by Messrs. H. Blagrove, Oury, R. Blagrove and Howell. The vocal portion of the selection included some of the most popular pieces from the well known operas, amongst the most effective of which were "Voi che sapete" (Madame Trebelli-Bettini) "Parto" (Madlle. Tietjens, with Mr. Lazarus's excellent clarinet *obbligato*), "Martern aller art" (Madlle. Ilma di Murska), "Dalla sua pace" (Mr. Vernon Rigby), "Deh Vieni" (so well sung by Mr. Santley as to be encored,) the duet, "Crudel perchè finora" (Madlle. Tietjens and Mr. Santley, also encored), and the Sestet, "Sola, sola." In the second part a genuine effect was created by Mr. Cummings's expressive singing of Felicien David's Romance, "O ma maitresse," which was encored; Madlle. Ilma di Murska was wonderfully successful in Meyerbeer's "Robert toi que j'aime," and Mr. Santley in the old song, "Hearts of oak," thoroughly aroused the enthusiasm of a somewhat weary audience. Mozart's overture "Der Schauspiel Director," commenced the first part; and the overtures to "Der Freischütz" (Weber) and "Zanetta" (Auber) were included in the second part.

The third and last miscellaneous concert, on Thursday morning, included two compositions by the Conductor, Mr. Benedict—the one an overture to Kleist's Drama, *Der Prinz von Homburg*, and the other a song and chorus, called "The Forging of the Anchor"—works so utterly unequal in merit as to make us believe it scarcely possible that they could have proceeded from the same mind. Of course we do not for a moment imagine that a song descriptive of the forging of an anchor is to be placed on a level with a grand dramatic overture, even supposing that they are both good of their kind; but we simply dislike the song because it is not even a good specimen of a bad school. Let us say, however, that the man who forged the anchor, not having vocal organs to work with, was scarcely fairly matched with Mr. Santley; and that although the victory inclined to his side, therefore, we trust that he will not pride himself upon being the better man. We regret to say that the composition was encored. As if to show the difference between music and noise, Mr. Benedict afterwards produced his new overture, which we have no hesitation in pronouncing to be the best orchestral work he has yet written. It is full of the highest dramatic interest, instrumented with the hand of a master, and so perfectly symmetrical in design as to make us long to hear it again when the pressure upon our space will not compel us to pass it over with this brief recognition of its important merits. Amongst the vocal pieces which produced the most effect, we may mention Madlle. Ilma di Murska's "Gli angui d'inferno,"

from *Il Flauto Magico*, and "O luce di quest'anima," from *Linda*, Madame Patey's "Cradle Song" (Randegger), with accompaniments for piano-forte, violas and violoncello, Madlle. Tietjens' "Bel raggio," Mr. Santley's "I wish to tune my quivering lyre" (Arthur Sullivan), Madlle. Tietjens and Madame Trebelli-Bettini's duet, "Serbami ognor," Mr. W. H. Cummings' song, "The Angel of Home" (H. Smart), and Mr. Vernon Rigby's old ballad, "The Thorn," for which he received an enthusiastic encore. Mr. Pierson's chorus, "Sound, immortal harp," was well sung, but calls for no remark. The instrumental pieces, besides Mr. Benedict's overture, already mentioned, were Beethoven's *Leonora* overture and Mendelssohn's "Cornelius March."

Before concluding our notice of this Festival (which we regret to hear was scarcely a pecuniary success) we must bear ample testimony to the excellence of the orchestra, the general efficiency of the chorus, and the skilful conductorship of Mr. Benedict, who showed the utmost artistic zeal and enthusiasm throughout the whole of this trying week.

The Festival at Worcester commenced on the Tuesday morning in the following week, thus allowing only two days' rest to the artists employed, as the whole of Monday was occupied with rehearsals. *Elijah* was the Oratorio selected for the first performance; and every person interested in the well being of the time-honoured Three Choir Festivals must have been glad to see that the Cathedral was almost full, and to hear that nearly all the tickets for the week had been already disposed of. The soprano solos in the first part were assigned to Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, and in the second part to Madlle. Tietjens, the tenor music being divided in the same manner between Mr. Vernon Rigby and Mr. Sims Reeves; Madame Patey and Madame Trebelli-Bettini shared the contralto solos, and the part of the Prophet (to the satisfaction of all who think, with us, that the personality of the characters should be preserved) was sung throughout by Mr. Santley. It is needless to dwell on the execution of this well known work by the equally well known vocalists; but it may be said that Madame Trebelli-Bettini, who has yet a name to make in Oratorio music, sang well, even if she did not fully realise the true intent of Mendelssohn; and that Mr. Vernon Rigby gave the beautiful air, "If with all your hearts," with a chasteness of feeling and truth of expression which cannot be too highly commended. Of course we had to endure the usual absurdity of hearing Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, after having sung the music of the widow, assume the part of the "boy;" but as we have so often pointed out this, as well as many other anomalies in the distribution of the characters in this essentially dramatic Oratorio, we presume that we may now consider it hopeless to expect any reform in the matter. The choruses went well throughout, especially, "Blessed are the men," "He watching over Israel," and "Thanks be to God," the latter, however, suffering, as usual at the Three Choir Festivals, by the unseemly move towards the "lunch."

Wednesday morning's performance commenced with Mr. Arthur Sullivan's sacred Cantata, *The Prodigal Son*, composed expressly for this Festival. If we were only to record the success of this work, it would by no means imply that we have any high estimate of its merit. Everything is now successful; and were not that tyrant Time eventually to pro-

nounce a judgment from which there is no appeal, there would be little solace for the critic who dares to state his own opinion, regardless of the popular voice. On this occasion however, we may say that Mr. Sullivan has shown a progress in his art which cannot be mistaken. The *Prodigal Son* is a thoughtful, conscientious work; and although unequal in merit, there can be no question that it will take rank far above any previous composition of its author. It is deeply sympathetic with the subject, betrays throughout not the slightest sign of haste or carelessness, and may be at once accepted as the latest proof of the development of a mind which has been steadily and diligently trained in that legitimate school of writing, which has produced the really great artists of the world. In constructing the *libretto* much skill has been shown, the Parable itself being accompanied with suitable portions selected from the Scriptures, which are woven in so as to form rather an Oratorio than a Sacred Cantata; the composition indeed being of sufficiently ample proportion to justify this more important name. There is no overture, but the work opens with an introduction, the theme of which is exquisitely graceful, and the instrumentation so appropriately placid, chiefly for the strings, combined with the delicate wind instruments, as to prepare the hearer for the character of the subject of the Cantata. The modulation from E flat to the dominant of D major, the key of the opening chorus, is extremely happy; and a very beautiful effect is obtained by the sopranos commencing the theme, with a figure for the violins, alternately rising and falling an octave. There is much excellent writing in this chorus, especially where the two subjects are worked together; and the orchestral accompaniments are masterly throughout. A tenor recitative, followed by an allegro in G minor, afterwards changing to the tonic major, commences the story, the whole of which is admirably expressive of the desire of the son to obtain the goods which are his due, and to eat, drink, and be merry. A recitative and air for the bass, which follows, is sufficiently impressive for the subject; but the theme is hardly more attractive to the audience than the advice which it illustrates is to the Prodigal, who desires to release himself from his father's supervision. After a short soprano recitative, one of the most important pieces occurs, descriptive of the revel in which the younger son indulges after leaving his father's house. This is commenced by the tenors and basses, followed by the sopranos and altos, in unison upon the key-note, accompanied by a most characteristic subject of only one bar's length, which is obstinately continued throughout the entire movement, in spite of various changes of key. The tenor solo, which is afterwards combined with the chorus, is extremely dramatic; and a very excellent effect is obtained by the unexpected entry of the choir upon the fifth of the key-note. The progress of the revel is depicted with admirable fidelity; with the skill of a true artist, and without any undue noise or obvious groping after unheard of harmonies, merits which cannot be too highly commended. In the conception and treatment of this movement, Mr. Sullivan has displayed a dramatic feeling and power of orchestral colouring which prove that, however he may be imbued with a reverence for the highest models in art, he can both think and act for himself. The revel is succeeded by a recitative for contralto, leading, after a short choral passage in unison, to an air, also for contralto, which, expressive and melodious

as it is, and popular as it may become, is scarcely of such musical excellence as the following air for soprano (introduced by a brief recitative), the words of which, commencing "O that thou hadst hearkened," are wedded to a most appropriately touching and gentle theme. Into the next movement the composer has thrown much tenderness of feeling; and indeed we consider this and the revel scene unquestionably the best numbers in the Cantata. The tenor solo, in which the Prodigal first shows signs of repentance, is commenced on a monotone, with continually varying harmonies in the orchestra, chiefly for the wood wind instruments, and this, with the following air, "I will arise and go to my father," (sung with exquisite pathos by Mr. Sims Reeves,) produced an effect upon the hearers, which, although applause was necessarily prohibited, was sufficiently decisive. The chorus "There is joy," is chiefly remarkable for the ingenious manner in which the leading theme of the opening chorus is introduced by the tenors, as an inner part; and the duet for tenor and bass (preceded by a short recitative), is merely an appropriate setting of the words, although the magnificent singing of Mr. Sims Reeves and Mr. Santley lifted it into decided prominence. The following bass recitative and air is a fine piece of writing, both for voice and instruments; the impassioned violin passages against the long holding notes for the voice (the words "Like as a Father" being set to the notes which occur to the same words in the opening chorus, but now doubled in length) and the alternate expression of joy and gratitude, rendering this, if not the most spontaneous, at least one of the most carefully written movements in the work. The following chorus, "O that men would praise the Lord," succeeded by a theme treated canonically, leads to a boldly written fugue, the subject of which amply shows that its composer has not only invention, but science fully at his command. The climax of this movement is extremely brilliant and effective. A tenor air, full of calm, religious fervour, is followed by an unaccompanied quartet; and then occurs the final chorus "Thou, O Lord, art our Father," the effects in which, although not particularly striking, are bold and clearly defined, the Hallelujah, especially, being treated with much skill. The Cantata was conducted by Mr. Sullivan, and its success, although silently expressed in the Cathedral, was audibly proclaimed outside, where the composer was warmly congratulated on the production of a work which, as we have already stated, is far in advance of any of the author's previous compositions. The principal vocalists, Madlle. Tietjens, Madame Trebelli-Bettini, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Mr. Santley, were most efficient in all their music; Mr. Sims Reeves giving the utmost effect to the phrases expressive of the sincere repentance of the Prodigal, Mr. Santley throwing the deepest feeling into the solos of the father, and Madlle. Tietjens and Madame Trebelli-Bettini rendering powerful aid in those portions which either carry forward the story in narrative, or act as commentaries upon the events.

A selection from Handel's *Judas Maccabæus* formed the second portion of the morning's performance, the principal parts in which were sustained by Madlle. Tietjens, Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, Madame Patey, Mr. Vernon Rigby, and Mr. Lewis Thomas. Commencing with the overture, most of the pieces which have obtained a world-wide celebrity, were given. Amongst the choruses which produced the pro-

foundest impression were "Fall'n is the foe," (which was finely sung), "We never will bow down," and "See the conquering hero comes." Madlle. Tietjens gave "From mighty kings," and "O liberty" (the violoncello *obbligato* excellently played by Mr. Collins). Mdme. Lemmens-Sherrington sang "Pious orgies," "Wise men flattering," and "So shall the lute;" Madame Patey gave a most artistic rendering of the beautiful song, "Father of heaven;" and the trying solo, "Sound an alarm," (which in the programme was assigned to Mr. Sims Reeves) was given with so much energy and real musical power by Mr. Vernon Rigby as to create a marked effect upon the hearers.

On Thursday morning the performance commenced with Rossini's *Messe Solennelle* and Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang*. As the principal singers in the first-named work were the same as at Norwich, it is unnecessary to say more than that in the choral part there was a general want of decision; that the contralto solo, "O salutaris hostia," which was given at Norwich, was omitted here; and that the "Prelude Religieux," for the organ, which was omitted at Norwich, was given here, Mr. G. Townshend Smith being at the organ. In the *Lobgesang* Mr. Sims Reeves sang finely; the soprano solos were well rendered by Madame Lemmens-Sherrington; and Madame Patey, although she had little to do, materially strengthened the general effect, her excellent voice and style being especially noticeable in the duet with Madame Sherrington, "I waited for the Lord."

Of the performance of the *Messiah*, on Friday morning, a few words must suffice. The principal parts were sung by Madlle. Tietjens, Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, Madame Trebelli-Bettini, Madame Patey, Mr. Sims Reeves, Mr. Santley and Mr. Lewis Thomas. These artists are too well known to need more than a passing eulogy upon their efforts; but we cannot help making especial mention of the singing of Mr. Sims Reeves, who seemed to have reserved the full force of his powers for the great declamatory air, "Thou shalt break them," which was delivered with extraordinary energy. The Cathedral was filled in every part; and the effect, looking from the orchestra to the extreme east end (the whole being now thrown open) was truly imposing.

The miscellaneous concerts commenced on Tuesday evening, in the College Hall. Mr. J. F. Barnett's Cantata, "The Ancient Mariner," occupied the first part of the programme, the principal vocalists being Madlle. Tietjens, Madame Patey, Mr. Vernon Rigby and Mr. Lewis Thomas. The execution of the work was excellent throughout, the choruses being sung with remarkable steadiness and precision. Encores were awarded to Madame Patey for her admirable rendering of the song "O sleep, it is a gentle thing," and to Madlle. Tietjens and Madame Patey for their singing of the characteristic duet, "Two voices in the air." The Cantata was steadily conducted by the composer, who received quite an ovation at the conclusion of the performance. The principal instrumental feature of the second part of the concert, was the fine performance of the first movement of Beethoven's violin concerto, by Mr. Carrodus, which, considering the length of the programme, was listened to with a tolerable amount of patience, the *cadenza*, however (a somewhat over elaborated one, by Molique) being a hazardous experiment upon a vocally inclined audience at a Festival concert.

Amongst the most effective vocal solos were Molique's song, "When the moon is brightly shining," exquisitely sung by Mr. Sims Reeves, Randegger's Serenade, "Dors enfant dors," given with much expression by Madame Trebelli-Bettini, and Blumenthal's song, "Love the pilgrim," to which Madlle. Tietjens rendered more justice than the composition really deserves. Nicolai's overture to the "Merry Wives of Windsor," concluded the concert.

At the second evening concert, on Wednesday, Mendelssohn's "Walpurgis-Night" was the great attraction. The solo parts were sustained by Madame Patey, Mr. Vernon Rigby and Mr. Santley, all of whom were thoroughly effective, Mr. Santley, especially, throwing the utmost feeling into the whole of the highly dramatic music which falls to his share. The choruses were scarcely so well sung as those on the previous evening in Mr. Barnett's Cantata; but the excessive work to which the choir had been subjected taken into account, the wonder is that the voices were not fairly worn out. In the selection from "Oberon," which followed, Madlle. Tietjens's magnificent singing of the *Scena*, "Ocean, thou mighty monster," was a decided feature. Mention must also be made of Madame Trebelli-Bettini's "O Araby," of Mr. Sims Reeves's chaste rendering of the song, "I'll weep for thee," (which, although now not sung in the opera, forms part of a *Scena* originally written for the tenor), and of the quartett, "Over the dark blue waters," admirably given by Madlle. Tietjens, Madame Patey, Messrs. Vernon Rigby and Lewis Thomas. Then came a miscellaneous selection, commencing with Mr. Sullivan's clever overture, "The Sapphire Necklace," (conducted by the composer) and containing popular pieces in which all the principal vocalists took part, amongst which we may mention "O mie fedeli," brilliantly given by Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, Blumenthal's "Evening song," most effectively rendered by Mr. Sims Reeves, and "The Thorn," so well sung by Mr. Vernon Rigby that, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, he was compelled to repeat the first verse. Even this was not considered enough; for weary as the audience appeared, and utterly prostrated as both vocalists and instrumentalists must have been, seven pieces had yet to come, under the heading of "Homage à Rossini." These compositions, selected at random from the works of Rossini, contained, amongst other well known vocal pieces "Bel raggio," sung by Madlle. Tietjens, "Non più mesta," finely given by Madame Trebelli-Bettini, and the capital Tarantella "Già la luna," rattled off in his best style by Signor Bettini, but much too rapidly for any orchestra to keep pace with him. The overture to "Guillaume Tell," played with an energy and brilliancy which surprised the few musical auditors left, concluded the concert, at about half-past eleven o'clock.

The last miscellaneous concert took place on Thursday, when a selection from *Il Flauto Magico* was given, commencing with the overture, and including some of the most favourite pieces, "La dove prende," (Madlle. Tietjens and Mr. Santley), the air, "Ah lo so" (Madlle. Tietjens), and the capital duet, "Pa, pa" (Madame Lemmens-Sherrington and Mr. Santley) being amongst the most effective, the last piece receiving an unanimous encore. "O cara immagine," which was to have been sung by Mr. Sims Reeves, was quietly passed

over, without any comment save a gentle murmur of dissatisfaction amongst the audience. Then followed a programme of miscellaneous vocal music, the effect of which to the listeners was that every singer had brought what he or she liked best. From this list (which we certainly cannot dignify with the name of a "selection") we may especially commend "Di tanti" (Madame Trebelli-Bettini), "Frapoco" (Mr. Sims Reeves), "Qui la voce" (Madlle. Tietjens), and "Come, if you dare" (Mr. Vernon Rigby). We may say, however, that a redeeming point was the performance of Beethoven's Symphony in F (No. 8), which ushered in the second part. The concert terminated with the National Anthem.

We are glad to find that the pecuniary results of this Festival have been in the highest degree satisfactory; for although the amount collected at the doors of the Cathedral, £922, (the whole of which goes to the fund of the Charity for which these Festivals are held) is less than that collected on the last occasion, the sale of tickets has been so great that a surplus will be left, which will be also handed to the fund.

A word of praise, before dismissing this Festival, must be awarded to Mr. Done, who supported the onerous duties of conductor, to Mr. G. Townshend Smith (who, we understand, accepted the post of organist at the Cathedral performances by particular request), and to Dr. Wesley, who accompanied most ably all the vocal music requiring such aid, at the evening concerts. Thanks are also due to the Stewards of both Festivals for the courtesy with which they fulfilled their laborious office of conducting the holders of tickets to their places, a duty rendered additionally perplexing at Worcester; for although admission had been duly granted to the representatives of the press, no seats had been provided for them, either in the Cathedral or the College Hall.

In judging of the effect of these great periodical musical gatherings, we think it unfair to consider them solely according to their bearing upon the art. The addition to the funds of local Charities, which might otherwise languish for want of aid, the gratification afforded to the many residents of the neighbourhood in which the meetings take place, and the frequent opportunities thus afforded for the assembling of friends and the display of hospitality must also be taken into account if we desire dispassionately to consider the benefits which the Festivals confer. With regard, however, to their mere artistic influence, we are inclined to believe that there is a growing tendency to awaken from the torpor too often inseparable from institutions around which so many traditions have clung. At Norwich and Worcester this year, novelties have been produced, and Rossini's *Messe Solennelle* has been performed at both Festivals. This commendable attempt to escape from dull routine ought by all means to be encouraged; but it should be borne in mind that, in addition to works by new composers, there are many works by old composers still comparatively unknown. That several sublime productions of the greatest writers should be left to repose undisturbed for so many years seems almost incredible, were it not known how those who have the ordering of programmes usually work in a groove. If artists who have musical power at these Festivals were to throw their heart into their task, and resuscitate some of these forgotten compositions, they may rely upon it

not only that they would infuse a new life into their meetings, but that they would receive the cordial co-operation of those who believe that, with such resources at command, Art, as well as Charity, might be equally aided and enriched.

THE STORY OF MOZART'S REQUIEM.

By WILLIAM POLE, F.R.S., Mus. Doc., Oxon.

(Concluded from p. 204.)

Zelter, Mendelssohn's master, said of the *Benedictus*, in his correspondence with Goethe, "The *Benedictus* is as excellent as it is possible to be, but the school decides it cannot be by Mozart. Süßmayer was acquainted with Mozart's school, but he had not been thoroughly initiated in it, had not practised it in his youth, and indications of this are found here and there in the beautiful *Benedictus*."

Oulibicheff, whose masterly work deserves to share in the immortality of its hero, speaks strongly, fully, and repeatedly, in favour of Mozart's claim to these portions of the Requiem. He says:—

"Süßmayer claims to have composed these; we have no proof in his favour, nor have we any evidence to the contrary. And if in matters of art we had to give a judgment as in matters of civil law, we must admit his claim, as no one comes forward to dispute it with him. But criticism is not bound down to the forms of law; the true proofs of the authenticity of a master-work lie in the work itself. The traveller who boasted that he made an extraordinary leap in Rhodes, may be asked by the critics, 'Why do you not also jump as high or as far here?' I do not wish to be thought unjust to Süßmayer, but, among his many works, not one has outlived him, and he owes all his present notoriety to Weber. If he, however, as a young man, was capable of composing three movements of the Requiem which, although they stand, in certain things, below the former ones, do not contrast unfavourably, either in idea, or style, or colouring, with a score which is acknowledged to form the highest masterpiece of the greatest musical genius of all time;—if this is so, we must necessarily admit one of two things; either Süßmayer has therewith begun to be Mozart and ceased to be Süßmayer, or the spirit of the master has come down from heaven to the scholar, for the purpose of inspiring him with the conclusion of the Requiem; and in this case we must admit that this celestial visitor has never paid him more than one visit. If we must believe in one of these miracles, I prefer the latter.

"We are certain (so far as there can be a moral certainty about anything) that Süßmayer did not compose these things entirely afresh. Whether he found any written indications for the fundamental ideas in them, or whether he received them from Mozart at the piano, with verbal explanations as to the instrumentation, will now never be fully known. So much, however, is certain, that some indications must have served him as the guide to his work. I will go further, and assert that the places are easily to be discovered where the indications have been sufficient, where they were insufficient, and where they were entirely wanting.

"For example, in the *Benedictus* and the *Agnus*, Mozart's ideas were indicated with sufficient clearness to make it possible to carry out these movements to the extent originally designed. In the *Sanctus*, on the contrary, this was not the case, as it is only at the commencement that it promises to surpass every other *Sanctus* in sublimity. What solemn grandeur! We prepare to listen with our whole soul, and we strain every auditory nerve;—but in a moment all is gone by!* Who would be liberal enough to make a present of these ten bars to Süßmayer? Nobody; not even Weber. The *Osanna*, however, is only the beginning of a fugue, which reminds one of Handel's finest subjects, and which deserved more development, if the writer had been in a position to carry it out. Süßmayer himself has indicated where the leading-strings failed him. Where the master stops, the pupil stops also. He says: 'In order to give the work more uniformity (?) I have taken the liberty of repeating the Kyrie fugue to the words, *Cum sanctis tuis*.' A fine way, indeed, to give a work more unity, to conclude it with the beginning! What sensible man would be satisfied with such a miserable excuse? If he was able to compose three new movements, he would certainly have composed the fourth also. We see from all this what extraordinary care Süßmayer took to avoid doing more of his own than was absolutely necessary. He would not place himself in the position of the 'crow in peacock's feathers,' and for this the world owes him eternal gratitude."

Oulibicheff, in another place, lays great stress on the "scraps of paper," which, he insists, must have been for the unfinished portions of the Requiem, and

* I do not see the force of this remark. Nearly all Handel's grandest efforts are very short, as, on obvious æsthetical principles, they ought to be.